

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

In the Claims:

1. (ORIGINAL) A kit for placing an implant into a disk space between opposing vertebrae having opposing end plates to be separated by a predetermined degree of lordosis, said kit comprising:

(A) an implant having:

a generally frusto-conical hollow body having:

- a leading end

- a trailing end comprising:

a trailing end rise

a terminal end

a longitudinal axis

a first taper increasing from said leading end to said trailing

end rise; and

a second taper increasing from said terminal end to said

terminal end rise

said first taper of said frusto-conical body having a conical angle approximating said degree of lordosis;

an implant thread pattern surrounding said body;

openings formed through a conical wall of said body into an interior of said body with said openings formed at least on diametrically opposite sides of said body;

(B) a tap having:

a shaft defining a longitudinal axis;

a tapping head at a distal end of said shaft, said tapping head having a tapping thread surrounding said axis with a thread pattern substantially matching said implant thread pattern;

said tapping thread includes a plurality of peaks and valleys defining a conical path around said axis with a leading end tap diameter adjacent said distal end and with a trailing end tap diameter spaced from said distal end, said trailing end tap diameter being greater than said leading end tap diameter;

said leading end tap diameter being substantially equal to said leading end implant diameter.

2. (ORIGINAL) A kit according to claim 1 wherein

said tapping head includes a hollow body defining a tap interior;

a plurality of channels for directing tapped debris from said tapping thread into said tap interior.

3. (ORIGINAL) A kit according to claim 2 wherein said tapping thread includes a plurality of axially extending grooves through said thread, said channels formed through said grooves and into said interior.
4. (ORIGINAL) A kit according to claim 2 wherein said channels are formed through said valleys.
5. (ORIGINAL) A kit according to claim 2 wherein an axial end of said interior is closed at said distal end.
6. (ORIGINAL) A kit according to claim 1 wherein said implant thread has a generally flat radial extremity in a surface of a cone defined by said implant thread.
7. (ORIGINAL) A kit according to claim 6 wherein said tapping thread has a sharp radial extremity.

8. (ORIGINAL) A kit according to claim 1 further comprising a distraction spacer having:

a rigid spacer body;

said body having at least diametrically opposite exterior surfaces defining an angle substantially equal to said degree of lordosis.

9. (ORIGINAL) An implant for placement into a disk space between opposing vertebrae having opposing end plates to be separated by a predetermined degree of lordosis, said implant comprising:

(A) a generally frusto-conical hollow body having:

(1) a leading end with a leading end diameter;

(2) a trailing end comprising:

- a trailing end rise having a trailing end rise diameter;

- a terminal end having a terminal end diameter;

(3) a first taper increasing from said leading end diameter to said trailing end rise diameter; and

(4) a second taper increasing from said terminal end diameter to said trailing end rise diameter.

10. (ORIGINAL) An implant according to claim 9 comprising an implant thread pattern surrounding said body;

openings formed through a conical wall of said body into an interior of said body with said openings formed at least on diametrically opposite sides of said body.

Application No. 10/807,463
Amendment Dated 4/23/07
Reply to Office Action of 12/21/06

11. (ORIGINAL) An implant according to claim 10 wherein sides of said body between said diametrically opposite sides are recessed inwardly from a cone defined by said frusto-conical body.

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A distraction spacer for placing an implant into a disk space between opposing vertebrae having opposing end plates separated by a predetermined degree of lordosis, said distraction spacer comprising:

- a main body;

- first and second diametrically opposed surfaces having a leading end and a trailing with a longitudinal axis passing therethrough, said first and second opposed surfaces extending predominantly in the direction of the longitudinal axis; and

- said first and second diametrically opposed surfaces converging towards said longitudinal axis from said trailing end to said leading end.

13. (ORIGINAL) A distraction spacer according to claim 12 wherein said main body is a frusto-conical shaped and said first and second diametrically opposed surfaces are portions of said frusto-conical shape.

14. (ORIGINAL) A distraction spacer according to claim 12 wherein said first and second diametrically opposed surfaces are flat surfaces.

15. (ORIGINAL) A distraction spacer according to claim 14 wherein said main body between said diametrically opposed surfaces is arcuate.

Application No. 10/807,463
Amendment Dated 4/23/07
Reply to Office Action of 12/21/06

16. (ORIGINAL) A distraction spacer according to claim 12 further including an internal axial threaded bore at said trailing end.

17. (ORIGINAL) A distraction spacer according to claim 15 further including a bore passing through said diametrically opposed arcuate surfaces.